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Annual Evaluation Report 2024–25

Purpose of the document

This document provides a progress report on the ILO Evaluation Office's work covering the reporting year 2024–25, as measured against the indicators and targets in its results-based Evaluation Strategy 2023–25. An extension of one year of the Strategy into 2026 is proposed (Part I). The report also looks at the ILO's overall effectiveness using project evaluations as proxies to assess trends in performance (Part II). The Governing Body is invited to endorse the recommendations in this report (see the draft decision in paragraph 82).

Relevant strategic objective: All.

Main relevant outcome: Enabler B: Improved leadership and governance.

Policy implications: Yes. Work across the policy outcomes on issues relevant to decent work and productivity.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None.

Follow-up action required: Yes.

Author unit: Evaluation Office (EVAL).

Related documents: [GB.352/PFA/8\(Rev.1\)](#); [GB.349/PFA/4](#); [GB.346/PFA/6\(Rev.1\)](#).

► Contents

	Page
Executive summary	5
Part I. Progress made towards achieving the targets of the Evaluation Strategy	7
Outcome 1. Enhanced capacities at the individual, organizational and enabling environment levels for planning, undertaking and using evaluations	7
Outcome 2. Enhanced evaluation systems and processes leading to more credible, strategic and higher quality evaluations	11
Outcome 3. Expanded knowledge base of evaluation findings and recommendations that effectively contributes to organizational learning and enhances organizational effectiveness	15
Enabling environment	19
Part II. Assessing the ILO's effectiveness and results	22
2.1. Impact and sustainability in action: How the ILO shaped policies, delivered strategic results and ensured sustainability through development cooperation in 2024.....	22
2.2. Assessing the overall effectiveness of the ILO DC portfolio in 2024 against 29 key performance indicators.....	26
2.3. Trends in effectiveness by policy outcomes: 2022–23 and 2024.....	31
Draft decision.....	33

► Executive summary

1. The 2024–25 Annual Evaluation Report comes at a critical juncture – not as a routine exercise, but as a strategic checkpoint amid global uncertainty, institutional reform and growing demands for accountability. It marks the final year of the ILO Evaluation Strategy 2023–25, with a **proposed one-year extension to the end of 2026** to consolidate gains, foster innovation and reinforce evaluation's strategic role in advancing the ILO's mission. In this context, evaluation provides clear, evidence-based insights to guide strategic decisions, improve impact and ensure effectiveness. More than just reporting on progress, the Annual Evaluation Report reaffirms evaluation as a foundation for accountability, learning and evidence-informed planning. The additional targets included for 2026 and the rolling work plan of high-level evaluations assume that adequate resources and operational capacity will remain available for full implementation.
2. Part I presents progress against the Evaluation Strategy targets for 2025 and provides targets for 2026 aligned with the proposed extension. In Part II, as in previous years, the report provides a performance overview of ILO's effectiveness, drawing on the latest annual batch of 50 final independent project evaluations (excluding mid-term evaluations).
3. **Part I** shows strong progress towards the end targets for 2025. **Under the 21 indicators, 17 targets have been achieved (one of which partly), reflecting sustained effort across the pillars of the Evaluation Strategy.** Evaluation planning has become more strategic through the Criteria-based Integrated Evaluation Planning System, now applied across all ILO regions and departments. **This has streamlined the portfolio to emphasize quality and strategic relevance over volume.**
4. While there is still room for more clustered evaluations, their expanded use has reduced evaluation fatigue and yielded clearer programmatic insights despite fragmented project design and funding. **Strategic use of waivers – where learning value is low or overlaps occur – has improved efficiency without compromising accountability.** These efforts focus limited resources where strategic value is highest.
5. EVAL leads innovation in displaying and storing its evaluation reports and providing access through artificial intelligence (AI). A complete revamp of the *i-eval* Discovery platform in 2023–24 and sustained use of the Automated Management Response System have built a solid digital infrastructure. **These investments supported the successful pilot launch of the *i-eval* AI Assistant, an evaluation chatbot that synthesizes findings from evaluation reports on the platform, offering source-cited insights to aid design, decision-making and communication.** This marks a shift from passive review of reports to rapid, actionable knowledge generation.
6. The March 2025 report of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC) commended EVAL for enhancing coordination among oversight functions. Collaboration with internal and external auditors has been strengthened, illustrated by the 2024 high-level evaluation of the Development Cooperation Strategy. **While maintaining structural independence, this growing collaboration fosters efficiencies and impactful oversight supporting results-based management.**
7. The standard and advanced versions of the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme are fully operational. **There is a continued increase in certified evaluation managers, and a new cohort of advanced learners is training to champion an evaluation culture.** Following

the creation of a dedicated job family for Evaluation Officials in the ILO in 2023, a dedicated job family was created for the Regional Evaluation Officers in 2025. Training for ILO constituents on evaluation concepts within broader capacity-building still holds significant potential and is conducted based on demand and available resources.

8. The ILO has enhanced communication and use of evaluation findings. **Tailored products such as the *i-eval* Insights series, impact podcasts, interactive dashboards and recently the *i-eval* AI Assistant have broadened the reach and relevance of outputs**, making evaluation findings more accessible and strengthening data-driven decision-making across stakeholders.
9. **Part II** presents findings from the annual comprehensive meta-analysis of the ILO's overall effectiveness, based on 50 final independent project evaluations and using 29 key performance indicators (KPIs) grounded in criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) and ILO cross-cutting policy areas.
10. The thematic focus of 2024 – impact and sustainability – responds to growing stakeholder demand for clearer value from investments. By showing what works, the analysis informs strategic adjustments, strengthens programmatic relevance and supports evidence-based decision-making. Rising expectations for measurable results from constituents, the Office and donors make this process essential to sustaining the ILO's relevance in an evolving development landscape. Established in 2013, the meta-analysis also enables multi-year tracking and trend analysis, offering a strategic lens to assess performance over time.
11. **The 2024 analysis finds that ILO development cooperation generated strong and sustained policy impact by embedding normative values into national systems, leveraging inclusive partnerships, aligning with national priorities and fostering long-term ownership through early planning, institutional delivery and capacity development.** Part II concludes with an overall review of performance trends at both the policy outcome level and across regional clusters of country programme outcomes for 2022–24. It shows steady progress across many indicator clusters, while also highlighting some efficiency challenges.
12. In short, extending the Evaluation Strategy through 2026 will help institutionalize recent innovations, foster deeper accountability and sharpen the focus on actionable insights. Evaluation is more than a technical exercise – it is a strategic tool for accountability, learning and influence. Its real value lies in how evidence is communicated directly to decision-makers, ensuring that findings inform choices at the highest levels and translate into meaningful policy and programmatic change.

► Part I. Progress made towards achieving the targets of the Evaluation Strategy

Outcome 1. Enhanced capacities at the individual, organizational and enabling environment levels for planning, undertaking and using evaluations



Sub-outcome 1.1. Improved strategic planning and coordination with key internal and external stakeholders strengthen evaluation effectiveness and efficiency

Indicator 1.1.1: Degree to which effective integrated criteria-based procedures and practices are institutionalized and applied in the ILO to reduce the volume of evaluations and have strategically oriented evaluation learning and evidence by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): Integrated criteria-based evaluation planning is used in at least 50 per cent of regions and departments to reduce the volume of evaluations and have more strategically oriented evaluations.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: Evidence mapping as part of criteria-based evaluation planning will be piloted within one department or region.

13. The Criteria-based Evaluation Planning System, launched in 2024, represents a shift from a budget-threshold approach to a more strategic and flexible model, prioritizing fewer but more meaningful evaluations driven by needs, such as by addressing evidence gaps. Combined with the evaluation clustering practice introduced over five years ago, the new system has yielded tangible results: in the current reporting period, about 25 evaluations were waived, and the evaluation requirements of 37 development cooperation projects were consolidated into 13 clustered evaluations. Uptake has been strong across all regions and in most departments and bureaux (8 out of 11), significantly surpassing the end target of 50 per cent. To further strengthen the strategic use of evaluations and address priority evidence gaps, an evidence-mapping pilot will be launched to test a practical approach for identifying and organizing existing evidence, aligning evaluation activities with evidence needs without compromising accountability, and supporting potential integration of this method in future planning cycles.

Indicator 1.1.2: The existence of evaluations that coordinate with and complement other oversight functions, knowledge and learning mechanisms in the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): 2025 Report of the IOAC to the Governing Body acknowledges progress in coordination and complementarity.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: Standard operating procedures for systematic information-sharing across evaluation, oversight and learning functions.

14. In its March 2025 report to the Governing Body, the IOAC welcomed the increased communication and knowledge-sharing between the evaluation and internal audit functions. It encouraged continued collaboration among all oversight functions and will monitor ongoing progress. EVAL also engages with the external auditors to promote information exchange and avoid duplication. However, a more systematic process is still desirable to strengthen

coordination among evaluation and other oversight functions. While the establishment of procedures was referenced in the 2023 milestone, it has yet to be fully realized, hence the additional target for 2026. This growing collaboration and sharing of real-time information, while maintaining the structural independence of both entities, fosters efficiencies and impactful oversight supporting results-based management

Indicator 1.1.3: Percentage of mandatory evaluations that are completed in a timely and quality manner until 2025.

Target (end of 2025): 95 per cent of mandatory and corporate evaluations are completed in a timely and quality manner.

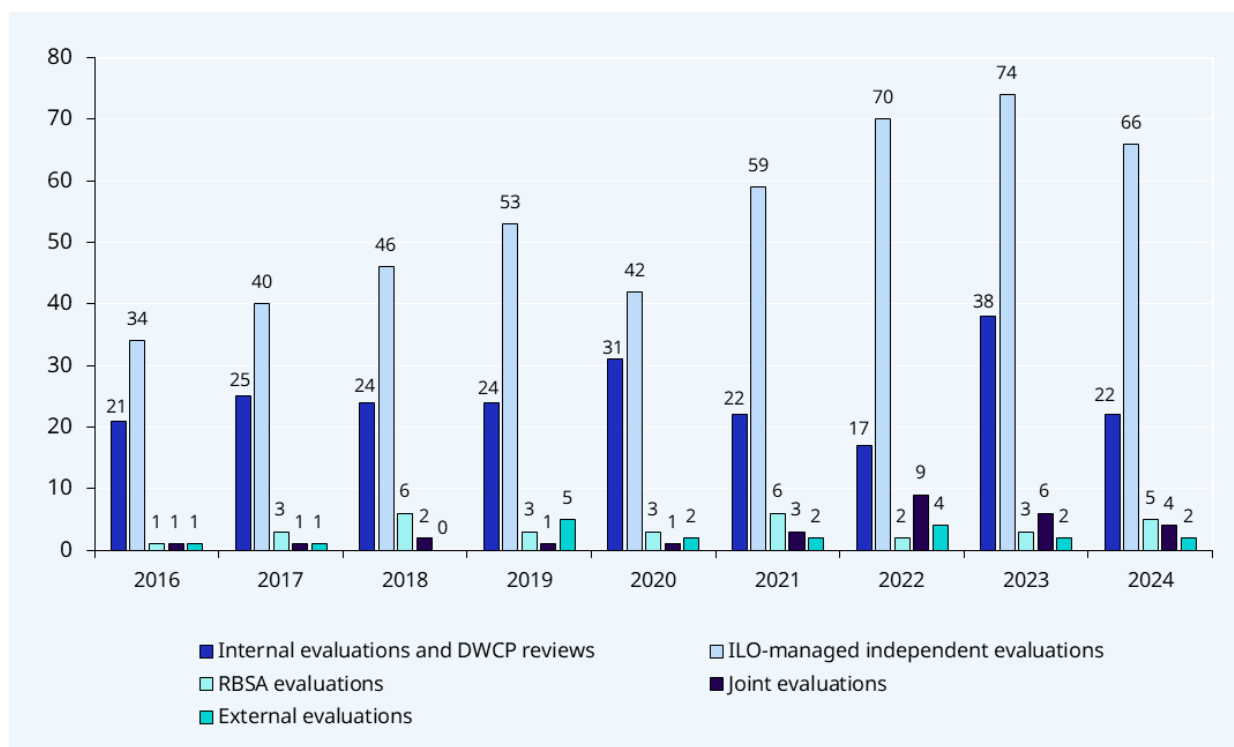
Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: 95 per cent of mandatory and corporate evaluations are completed in a timely and quality manner.

Project and programme evaluations

15. All planned and completed ILO evaluations are publicly accessible on the [i-eval Discovery](#) dashboard, along with related lessons learned, good practices, recommendations and management responses. As of June 2025, the dashboard contained over 1,700 evaluations, 2,800 lessons learned, 1,600 good practices and 3,000 recommendations, providing a rich resource for accountability, transparency and organizational learning. In 2024, 66 independent evaluations were completed – a welcomed reduction of 11 per cent from 74 the previous year – reflecting the strategic implementation of criteria-based evaluation planning and clustered evaluations. One independent evaluation was not conducted, resulting in a 98 per cent completion rate, surpassing the 95 per cent target. Of the 25 internal evaluations due in 2024, 22 were completed, achieving an 88 per cent completion rate and a 2 per cent increase from the previous year.

► **Figure 1. Number of completed evaluations by type, 2016–24**



Selecting high-level evaluation topics for strategic use

16. EVAL's proposed rolling work plan for 2026–28 draws on constituents' input and a review of Governing Body and International Labour Conference documents. The topics are aligned with ongoing strategic initiatives, including recurrent discussions, or specific requests from the Governing Body. For 2026, the evaluations proposed will support two priorities: the mid-term review of the Skills Strategy and social protection, ensuring timely evidence for the 2027 recurrent discussion. In 2027, the plan anticipates an evaluation on employment to feed into the 2028 recurrent discussion, alongside a frequently delayed high-level evaluation on normative action. For 2028, possible themes include technology for decent work, a reassessment of the occupational safety and health strategy, and a review of the Priority Action Programme modality or of social dialogue and tripartism. While the plan may face financing constraints, the preferred option of the constituents who provided input is to maintain high-level evaluations, with evaluations of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) possibly shifting from annual to biennial if necessary. The total number of high-level evaluations in 2026–27 will depend on available resources and EVAL's operational capacity.

► Table. Rolling work plan, 2025–28

Year	High-level evaluation 1	High-level evaluation 2	DWCPs/region	Inputs/comments received
2028	Institutional: Harnessing the fullest potential of technology for decent work (including the work of the International Training Centre); Regional Meetings; or Outcome: The ILO's occupational safety and health strategy	Institutional: A review of the ILO's priority action programme modality; or Outcome: Social dialogue and tripartism	Arab States	Considered too early and decisions subject to adjustments agreed in 2026–27
2027	Outcome: Employment	Outcome: Normative action	Europe and Central Asia	Broad support for both topics, but also some support for sustainable enterprise development or the care economy
2026	Outcome: Skills and lifelong learning	Outcome: Social protection	Asia and the Pacific	Broad agreement
2025	Outcome: Evaluation of youth employment strategy 2020–30	Global evaluation of the Better Work programme	Latin America and the Caribbean (Central America)	Completed

Sub-outcome 1.2. Enhanced evaluation capacity further strengthens evaluation function to implement its programme of evaluations

Indicator 1.2.1: Availability of improved training and recognition of, and incentives for, regional and departmental evaluation officers, focal points and evaluation managers in the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): 100 per cent of regional evaluation officers benefit from a standardized job family aligned with the ILO's job family for evaluators; 30 ILO staff are certified in the advanced Evaluation Manager Certification Programme (EMCP+).

Status: Partly achieved

Target for 2026: A cumulative total of 20 ILO staff are certified in the advanced Evaluation Manager Certification Programme (EMCP+).

17. The 2023 milestone targets related to incentives, such as advanced training courses and deeper involvement in the evaluation process, were met by early 2024. A major breakthrough was the creation of a dedicated job family for evaluation staff at ILO headquarters in 2024 and the completion of a job family for ILO Regional Evaluation Officers in 2025. In November 2024, EVAL launched the intensive EMCP+ pilot course in partnership with the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) and funding from the Human Resources Development Department (HRD). Ten experienced evaluation managers were selected and are completing their practicum in 2025. To maintain the course's quality and intensity, the focus remains on smaller cohorts of ten, making it more realistic to reduce the cumulative 2025 target for training advanced evaluation managers from 30 to 20 by the end of 2026. Additional incentives were introduced during this period by involving evaluation managers in stakeholder workshops. However, for more advanced measures, such as internal cost recovery for managers assigning staff to dedicated evaluation manager tasks, no viable modalities that are aligned with ILO regulations have been identified.

Indicator 1.2.2: Number of standard training activities organized by the ILO for tripartite constituents that are supported by EVAL to mainstream concepts on the evaluation of decent work until 2025.

Target (end of 2025): Three training activities organized by the ILO for tripartite constituents are supported by EVAL to mainstream concepts on the evaluation of decent work.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: By the end of 2026, EVAL will support at least one ACTRAV- or ACT/EMP-led ITCILO course, based on identified relevance and demand.

18. Strengthening evaluation capacities among tripartite constituents remains a key priority through active collaboration with ILO departments and regional offices. Building on previous efforts, EVAL delivered four training sessions on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and monitoring and evaluation in 2024–25, reaching 119 constituents across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific – surpassing the 2025 target by 300 per cent.¹ While sustaining this level of results, EVAL will focus on integrating materials

¹ In 2024–25, 31 employers' representatives, 40 workers' representatives and 48 government officials were trained in monitoring and evaluation. In 2023–24, 11 employers' representatives, 6 workers' representatives and 116 government officials were trained.

into ITCILO training courses for the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) in 2026.

Indicator 1.2.3: Percentage increase in the number of EMCP-certified ILO staff.

Target (end of 2025): 10 per cent increase against 2022 baseline in number of qualified EMCPs.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: Maintain 150+ active certified evaluation managers; offer training if numbers fall below target.

19. In a period of constrained resources, the continued development of **ILO-certified evaluation managers has proven to be a critical asset for EVAL's hybrid, decentralized evaluation system**. A small core EVAL team at headquarters retains oversight and approval authority for every independent evaluation, while regional evaluation officers, departmental evaluation focal points and trained impartial evaluation managers and external consultants play a pivotal role in supporting the workload. Responding to sustained demand for EMCP training, EVAL has surpassed its target for the end of 2025 by 28 per cent. Currently, 208 ILO staff members are certified evaluation managers – an increase of 38 per cent from the 2022 baseline. This milestone underscores the Office's strategic success in expanding its pool of qualified evaluation managers, enhancing its capacity to deliver quality oversight and informed decision-making despite limited resources. One of the challenges is maintaining a core group of certified evaluation managers who are active, as their availability may vary due to departures and competing work responsibilities.

Outcome 2. Enhanced evaluation systems and processes leading to more credible, strategic and higher quality evaluations



Sub-outcome 2.1. Use of more strategically oriented evaluations provides evaluative information that is more responsive to strategic and learning needs, enhancing the knowledge base on the ILO's contribution to decent work and providing more learning opportunities

Indicator 2.1.1: Degree to which clustered evaluations are institutionalized and functional in the ILO and are supported by donors by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): At least 60 per cent of ILO donors are involved in cluster evaluations, including 15 of the largest ILO donors.

Status: Not achieved

Target for 2026: 30 per cent of the 20 largest donors are involved in clustered evaluations.

20. In 2024, 13 independent evaluations were conducted of 37 development cooperation projects involving 9 funding partners. This is slightly below the previous period (16 evaluations clustering 42 projects involving 13 funding partners) but well above the 2022 level of 7 evaluations, 20 projects and 7 funding partners. While progress is evident, targets need to be adjusted to reflect operational realities. Engaging 15 major donors by 2026 remains feasible, but the sub-target of reaching 60 per cent of all donors is impractical, given the immense donor base ranging from large donors to small private contributors. EVAL and the Multilateral Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department (PARTNERSHIPS) have

acted to strengthen alignment with donor priorities and improve evaluation efficiency. A new corporate standard for evaluation clauses, aligned with policy, designates clustered evaluations as the default. This shift aims to streamline resources, reduce duplication and yield more strategic insights. Updated guidance supports implementation.

Indicator 2.1.2: Degree to which impact and ex-post evaluations are integrated in the evaluation plan of the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): At least one ex-post evaluation and one impact evaluation are undertaken by EVAL or a technical department with support from EVAL.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: 50 per cent of impact evaluations are captured in the *i-eval* Discovery evaluation planning process.

21. In 2024–25, EVAL intensified efforts to promote the Impact Evaluation Review Facility to strengthen the quality of impact and ex-post evaluations at key design and reporting stages. This led to support from the Facility for several evaluations, including the impact assessment of the Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme's terms of reference in Lebanon, the International Labour and Environmental Standards project in Pakistan, and draft reports from Viet Nam's child labour programme and an impact study in Türkiye. Growing use highlighted misunderstandings and broad interpretations, even within United Nations (UN) inter-agency collaborations, of what qualifies as a credible impact evaluation. Despite clear ILO guidance, compliance remains uneven, underscoring the importance of EVAL's support services and periodic ex-post quality checks, such as the 2024 review assessing whether evaluations labelled as "impact evaluations" met standards. Despite these challenges, the ILO exceeded its 2025 target of at least one impact evaluation and one ex-post evaluation. With further support, the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund could broaden uptake through flexible financing, while tools such as criteria-based integrated evaluation planning are expected to promote more rigorous evaluations addressing key evidence gaps.

Sub-outcome 2.2. Appropriate methodologies responsive to the ILO's mandate, context and learning needs are implemented

Indicator 2.2.1: Degree to which participatory methods for evaluations are further developed and applied for an enhanced use of results by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): At least 10 per cent of surveyed evaluation users positively report on using evaluation results.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: At least 30 per cent of surveyed evaluation users positively report on using evaluation results.

22. The ILO met its 2025 and earlier targets by enhancing quality assurance (QA) guidance and increasing participatory methods, especially in decentralized evaluations. Revising the ex-post Quality Assurance Tool enabled measurement of broader involvement of stakeholders, including constituents and donors. By 2024, 29 per cent of evaluations reflected this wider participation. In Latin America and the Caribbean, a 2025 study found a strong link between stakeholder participation and institutional capacity to implement recommendations, underscoring the value of engagement for follow-through. A survey of a small group of ILO managers showed that 78 per cent found evaluation recommendations useful or highly useful,

with early feedback noting improvements in project design, government engagement, coordination and donor support as a result.

Indicator 2.2.2: Development of improved ILO evaluation policy guidelines and guidance material to best reflect the ILO's mandate and policy drivers by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): At least three guidelines are updated or added for evaluations to best reflect the ILO's mandate and policy drivers.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: The fifth edition of policy guidelines is produced as an interactive, modular platform that adapts to the evaluation needs step by step.

23. EVAL regularly updates its guidance to reflect emerging priorities in the world of work. In 2023–24, the fourth edition was released in both booklet and digital formats, with content organized by thematic pillars and linked to related tools. During this period, EVAL mainstreamed disability inclusion across existing materials and developed new guidance on just transitions, responding to low scores in past quality assessments. Looking ahead, EVAL will continue to update its results-based evaluation guidelines using innovative, user-friendly formats – potentially assisted by AI – to ensure continued relevance and accessibility for ILO staff and evaluation practitioners.

Sub-outcome 2.3. The ILO's continued involvement in relevant initiatives in the UN system and multilateral institutions strengthens the independence, quality and credibility of its evaluation work

Indicator 2.3.1: Outcomes and products of the working groups of the United Nations Evaluation Group integrated into Evaluation Strategy guidance documents by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): At least one ILO Evaluation Strategy guidance document has benefited from EVAL's contribution to relevant initiatives in the UN system and multilateral institutions.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: At least one joint UN synthesis initiative to capture progress concerning SDG 8 has been completed.

24. EVAL met its 2025 target through strong engagement in UN evaluation initiatives. It played a leading role in a joint meta-synthesis on the UN Youth Strategy's education and employment priorities, with the ILO contributing 31 per cent of the sampled reports, thus improving quality and relevance and elevating decent work and coherence in youth programming. EVAL also supported the UN's Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative, ensuring that SDG 8 was represented under the Prosperity pillar. Synthesis reviews and meta-studies are now central to EVAL's approach, increasing the utility of evaluation findings. In the UN Collaborative's working group on AI, EVAL highlighted labour data gaps under SDG 8 and promoted integrating ILO insights into AI systems. The process has led to a set of recommendations on equitable AI, multilingual access and citizen-led data governance which are aligned with the ILO's mandate. While the implementation depends on funders, EVAL's contributions will shape global approaches to responsible technology and inform the guidance of the ILO Evaluation Strategy.

Sub-outcome 2.4. Quality of all types of evaluations assures credible, useful evaluation results that can be acted upon by management and constituents

Indicator 2.4.1: Availability of an improved and effective quality assessment mechanism in the ILO by 2025 to assess the utility of independent evaluations.

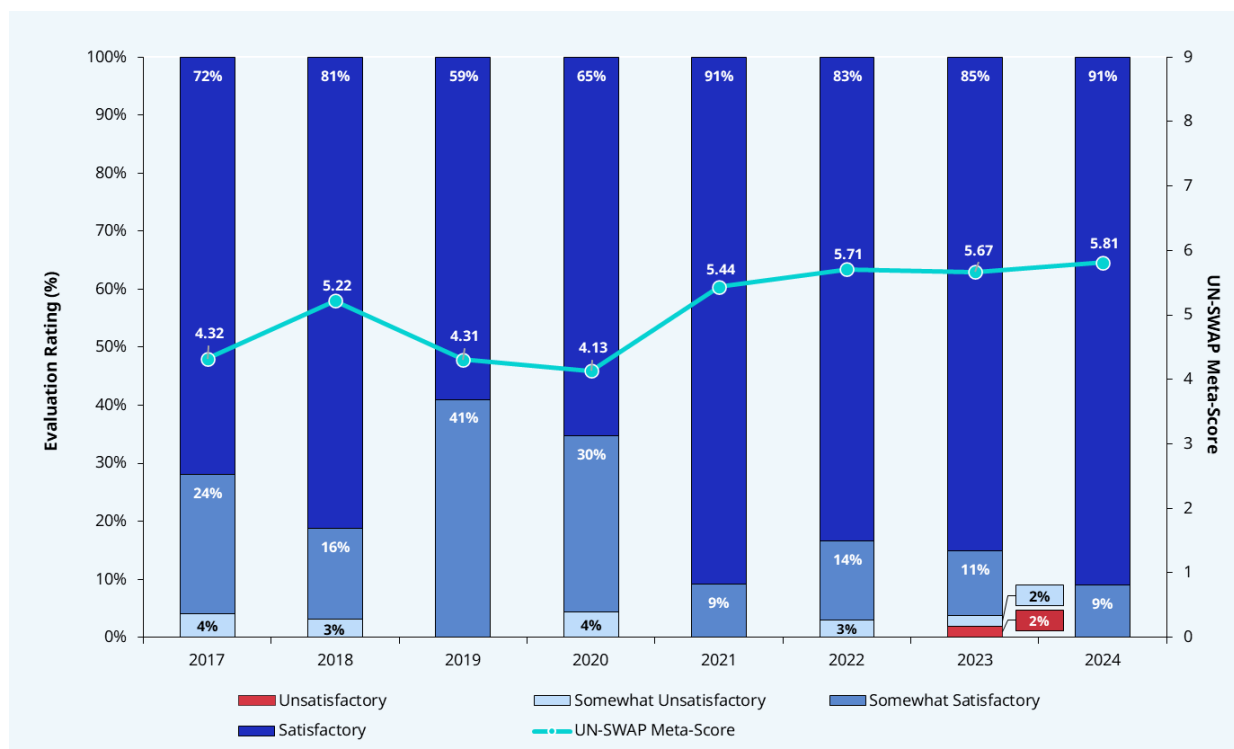
Target (end of 2025): At least 10 per cent of evaluations apply novel approaches to assessing their utility.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: At least 15 per cent of evaluations involve diverse categories of stakeholders in analysis and reporting through participatory methods measured against 2025 baseline.

25. The 2024 QA process added a criterion on participatory practices, showing that greater constituent participation strongly correlates with improved quality. Evaluations using highly participatory methods (12 per cent) consistently scored 5 out of 6, meeting the 10 per cent target for novel approaches and establishing a 2026 baseline. A 2025 study from Latin America and the Caribbean likewise confirmed that early stakeholder engagement increases legitimacy, usefulness and sustainability. Since 2015, the ILO has run a robust external QA system aligned with UN standards, including the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP); in 2024, 74 evaluations were reviewed, with 91 per cent rated “Satisfactory”, the highest since 2017, and a median score of 5. UN-SWAP performance improved to an average of 5.81, with 32 per cent of evaluations fully meeting gender-responsive standards and 60 per cent showing strong progress. All three high-level evaluations in 2024 were also rated “Satisfactory”, but methodology scores flagged the need for clearer documentation. These results reflect stronger portfolio quality and underscore the importance of preserving the QA system, including exploring cost recovery from development cooperation budgets to ease reliance on regular budget funds for the QA exercise.

► **Figure 2. Annual quality ratings from evaluation reports (general and gender), 2017–24**



Indicator 2.4.2: Operational and effective quality assessment process for impact evaluations in place and applied in the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): At least 50 per cent of impact evaluations in the ILO use EVAL's quality assessment tool and community of practice for impact evaluations.

Status: Not achieved

Target (end of 2026): At least 50 per cent of impact evaluations in the ILO known to EVAL use the quality assessment tool.

26. Although a comprehensive inventory and baseline to verify the proportion of impact evaluations using EVAL's quality assessment tool and community of practice are not yet in place, significant progress has been made in strengthening quality standards and methodological rigour. In 2023, EVAL developed and disseminated a standardized quality assessment tool for both centralized and decentralized impact evaluations under indicator 2.1.2. To support uptake, EVAL organized community of practice sessions in 2024–25: the first reintroduced the ILO Impact Evaluation Reference Framework and shared lessons from an ex-post review; the second, which was delivered with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), focused on randomized controlled trial methods and rigorous evaluation design; and a third, planned for late 2025, will examine youth employment services in Tunisia. In parallel, EVAL has mapped the integration of impact evaluations in *i-eval* Discovery. Looking ahead, EVAL will prioritize establishing a reliable inventory and baseline to track usage while continuing to promote the tool and strengthen technical engagement through the community of practice.

Outcome 3. Expanded knowledge base of evaluation findings and recommendations that effectively contributes to organizational learning and enhances organizational effectiveness



Sub-outcome 3.1. The ILO's evaluation dashboard (*i-eval* Discovery) is revamped with improved functionality and use

Indicator 3.1.1: Existence of an improved *i-eval* Discovery for enhanced visibility and use by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): 20 per cent increase in the use of *i-eval* Discovery and more user-friendly access through AI plug-ins or comparable innovations.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: The *i-eval* Discovery AI chatbot is rolled out to the public and over 60 per cent of users find the chatbot to be responsive to their needs.

27. Since its launch in 2016, the ILO's *i-eval* Discovery dashboard has provided public access to over 1,700 evaluations and 5,000 related documents, offering valuable lessons, good practices, and recommendations. **User access surged by 409 per cent** during the strategy period – far exceeding the 20 per cent target and demonstrating its value as a key evaluation resource. Building on this progress and aligned with 2025 indicator targets, the *i-eval* AI Assistant was launched in early 2025, integrated within *i-eval* Discovery. Leveraging generative AI and retrieval-augmented generation, it transforms complex queries into concise, two-page

summaries with full citations and direct links pulled from evaluation reports in *i-eval* Discovery in less than 20 seconds. Developed by EVAL in collaboration with the Information and Technology Management Department (INFOTEC), it was the first AI tool of a set of pilot initiatives sponsored by the Director-General that was approved for operational use within the ILO and is a pioneering innovation within the UN system. It is reshaping how evaluative evidence supports project design, accountability and learning. Users can now quickly discover what works, where and why, with direct access to source reports for verification. Full internal access is planned by late 2025 and public rollout for early 2026.

Sub-outcome 3.2. Better targeted knowledge and communication products strengthen their potential use and integration in the ILO's knowledge base

Indicator 3.2.1: Development of enhanced synthesis and meta-study reports responsive to needs by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): Five audience-specific products providing synthesized information on evaluation results and learnings are produced.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: Evaluative evidence generated through the *i-eval* AI Assistant is used to support at least three audience-specific products of synthesized information on evaluation results and learnings.

28. In 2025, EVAL launched *i-eval* Insights, a new series of targeted products distilling key findings from meta-analyses on decent work outcomes and ILO effectiveness through development cooperation. The first three editions focused on: [promoting international labour standards](#), [strengthening social dialogue](#) and [promoting equal opportunities for persons with disabilities](#). EVAL also published thematic syntheses on youth employment, the Better Work programme and ILO interventions in Central America. In 2025, a cross-regional synthesis of country programme reviews was produced with regional collaboration. To support strategic discussions of the International Labour Conference in 2025, EVAL produced two synthesis reviews on [formalization interventions](#) and [social dialogue](#). At the regional level, a meta-study of evaluation recommendations and management responses was led by the Latin America and the Caribbean regional office in coordination with EVAL. The meta-study was designed as a forward-looking tool to inform programming, policy design and accountability. A synthesis of evaluations in Africa will follow at the end of 2025. This expanding body of knowledge has driven a 320 per cent increase against the 2025 target, reflecting strong demand for needs-based syntheses of evaluative evidence. The *i-eval* AI Assistant will further enhance this endeavour.

Indicator 3.2.2: A functional and effective mechanism to validate good practices is in place in the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): At least 25 per cent of good practices are validated using the agreed validation approach before being shared with the community of practice and Global Technical Teams.

Status: Not achieved

Target for 2026: Two targeted reports presenting good practices drawn from evaluation findings are developed and are validated by ILO technical experts to enhance relevance and uptake.

29. ILO evaluations highlight good practices that should be replicated and scaled up across the Organization's work. They are publicly accessible through *i-eval* Discovery and cover various thematic topics for ILO projects and programmes. The *i-eval* Insights series, which provides

thought-provoking content on the world of work based on evaluative evidence, is based on good practices that are validated by technical experts to provide insights on how they can be used in existing and future interventions. Considering that the 2024 Annual Evaluation Report already stated that the current indicator has been adjusted to reflect these developments, the “Insights series approach” provides for a more feasible approach by providing regular synopses of lessons learned and good practices developed in cooperation with technical experts.

Indicator 3.2.3: Extent to which innovative ways to present targeted evaluation results exist and are applied in the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): 25 per cent of new communication and knowledge management products incorporate innovative ways of presenting targeted results.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: 30 per cent of new communication and knowledge management products incorporate innovative ways of presenting targeted results.

30. The quantity and scope of EVAL’s communication and knowledge products have significantly increased over the past ten years and primarily target ILO constituents and staff. Noteworthy examples during this reporting period include the launch of an outcome-based work plan dashboard, QA project scorecards, a podcast on impact evaluation, and events for evaluation managers and impact evaluation practitioners within the ILO. Moving forward, EVAL will continue to focus on creating more targeted communication and knowledge products to best serve its intended audiences.

Indicator 3.2.4: Percentage of evaluation recommendations fully or partially implemented within 12 months of completion of an evaluation. An effective mechanism to assess the quality of follow-up to recommendations is in place in the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): 85 per cent of recommendations are fully or partially implemented within 12 months of completion of an evaluation.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: 85 per cent of recommendations are fully or partially implemented within 12 months of completion of an evaluation.

31. Management responses to recommendations from independent evaluations are required to be submitted by line managers through the Automated Management Response System launched in 2018. Line managers are responsible for indicating if recommendations have been completed or partially completed, if no action is planned, if action has not yet been taken or if the recommendation has been rejected.
32. During the review period, 58 of the 63 required management responses to recommendations from independent evaluations were received (92 per cent)² representing 430 of the 465 recommendations that have been addressed. Of these, 85 per cent of recommendations have been “completed” or “partially completed”. For the remainder, 10 per cent of recommendations have not been yet actioned, 3 per cent of recommendations do not have any action planned,

² Management responses not submitted, despite multiple reminders: ILO-Ankara (three evaluations totalling 21 recommendations) and CO-Kinshasa (two evaluations totalling 14 recommendations).

and 2 per cent of recommendations have been rejected. The overall completion rates would have been higher had all offices submitted their required management responses.

Sub-outcome 3.3. Improved tracking of uptake and use by constituents and management of the knowledge and lessons generated from evaluations for governance and decision-making

Indicator 3.3.1: Extent to which the profile of evaluation results is strengthened in the ILO's strategic and programmatic documents (programme and budget, programme implementation report, Governing Body reports) and knowledge-sharing platforms.

Target (end of 2025): Evaluation findings are part of at least one strategic and programmatic document, and in one knowledge-sharing platform.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: Evaluation findings are consistently embedded across strategic and programmatic documents (programme implementation reports, programme and budget documents, and strategic plans) and organizational knowledge platforms.

33. As part of its annual review of how evaluation findings are used in ILO strategic documents, EVAL assessed 169 documents from recent sessions of the International Labour Conference and Governing Body, as well as key reports such as the 2024–25 Programme Implementation Report and the 2026–27 Programme and Budget proposals. This builds on its review in 2023 of 182 documents and serves as a proxy to track the use of evaluation insights in strategic decision-making.

Year	Documents reviewed	Total references	Policy decisions	Programme design	Evidence in discussions
2024	182	66	23%	9%	68%
2025	169	60	38%	13%	48%

34. This reflects a positive trend toward the integration of evidence from evaluations into both policy and programme cycles. The increased share of references influencing policy decisions signals deeper institutional uptake. These results confirm that the target for the end of 2025 (the inclusion of evaluation findings in at least one strategic and programmatic document and one knowledge-sharing platform) has been achieved. Looking ahead to 2026, the aim is to move from inclusion to systematic use, ensuring that evaluation findings are consistently embedded across strategic and programmatic documents and organizational knowledge platforms. Achieving this will require stronger institutional mechanisms and increased engagement from decision-makers to enhance planning, learning and accountability.

Indicator 3.3.2: Enhanced strategic role of the EAC and regional chapters in the ILO by 2025 for the strategic identification of knowledge requirements, uptake and use of evaluation results.

Target (end of 2025): 90 per cent of EAC discussions are on strategic issues, focusing on evaluation insights and implications arising from high-level evaluations, synthesis reviews and meta-analyses.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: The EAC's role in supporting regional and departmental uptake is enhanced further through evaluative insights.

35. Chaired by the Deputy Director-General, the Evaluation Advisory Committee met three times during the review period – once in late 2024 (not covered in the 2024 Annual Evaluation Report) and twice by August 2025. Discussions focused on translating high-level evaluations into strategic, actionable insights, particularly in complex areas such as post-conflict recovery, fundamental rights and rural development. The Committee emphasized cross-departmental coordination, timely follow-up and integrating evaluation findings into planning and budgeting. Follow-up discussions in the Committee on the 2019 high-level evaluation on public-private partnerships indirectly led to new guidance being issued in 2025 which is 95 per cent compliant with the evaluation recommendations. While follow-up to the 2022 high-level evaluation of the COVID-19 response has occurred, it remains incomplete.
36. A comprehensive review of the management responses to high-level evaluations showed overall consistent progress aligned with the target of 90 per cent of strategic discussions by the end of 2025. However, it also revealed challenges in implementation, highlighting the need for stronger follow-up and better integration of ILO approaches, with active input from ACT/EMP and ACTRAV to improve effectiveness. Additionally, the Regional Office for Arab States launched a pilot **Regional Committee for Evaluations** to boost regional accountability and learning aligned with the goals of the 2023–25 Evaluation Strategy.

Indicator 3.3.3: Number of comprehensive and timely overviews of the overall effectiveness of the ILO produced annually by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): Three annual overviews of ILO effectiveness produced and results presented to the Governing Body through the annual evaluation report.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: Four annual overviews of ILO effectiveness produced and results presented to the Governing Body through the annual evaluation report.

37. EVAL continues to deliver annual performance assessments of the ILO's decent work results using a robust, well-established methodology, thereby fully meeting the target for the end of 2025. This year's meta-analysis on development cooperation continued to apply an enhanced, innovative approach to assess effectiveness, aligned with the ILO's strategic priorities. Performance is reported at the levels of country programme outcomes and policy outcomes, with a chapter highlighting trends in specific results and impact. The findings are presented in Part II.



Enabling environment

Enabler 1: Degree to which a functioning evaluation trust fund exists in the ILO by 2025 that is supported by funding partners.

Target (end of 2025): Consultations started with at least two funding partners based on a concept note on the trust fund.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: At least two new funding partners are part of the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund.

Custodians: PARTNERSHIPS, FINANCE and EVAL.

38. The ILO is committed to enhancing how evaluations inform decision-making and support strategic goals. Achieving truly transformative evaluation requires adaptable approaches, not just new technologies. Key steps include greater flexibility in evaluation funding, such as

through the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund. Since the last reporting period, EVAL and PARTNERSHIPS have collaborated to draft standard evaluation clauses for funding agreements. These clarify existing optional modalities, including clustering evaluations and allowing for flexible contributions to the Trust Fund, either through direct allocation or by designating unspent evaluation funds. The goal is to increase awareness of these options during discussions on agreements. To date, consultations with four funding partners have led to one donor contributing evaluation resources to the Trust Fund; discussions with the three other donors are continuing and showing some progress.

Enabler 2: Percentage of ILO DWCPs and development cooperation-funded interventions that are responsive to constituents' institutional capacity needs and their on-the-ground realities.

Target (end of 2025): At least 60 per cent of ILO development cooperation projects involve constituents in design and implementation. At least 70 per cent of new DWCPs (against 2022 baseline) involve constituents in their design.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: At least 60 per cent of ILO development cooperation projects involve constituents in design and implementation. At least 70 per cent of new DWCPs (against 2022 baseline) involve constituents in their design.

Custodians: Evaluation network (EVAL, regional evaluation officers, departmental evaluation focal points, evaluation managers), ACT/EMP, ACTRAV, PARTNERSHIPS and the Strategic Programming and Management Department (PROGRAM).

39. During the reporting period, the ILO deepened its engagement with constituents in development cooperation (DC) initiatives and sustained strong performance in the planning of DWCPs. EVAL's meta-analysis on decent work found that 67 per cent of DC interventions in 2024 were designed with the active involvement of constituents – surpassing the 2025 target by 7 per cent. In parallel, all DWCPs approved in 2024–25 were developed with direct input from constituents, maintaining the 100 per cent participation rate achieved since 2023. This continued commitment to inclusive planning reinforces the relevance, ownership and impact of the ILO's work on the ground.

Enabler 3: Integrate evaluation needs into monitoring and evaluation frameworks of development cooperation projects by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): 20 per cent increase (against 2022 baseline) in ILO DC-funded interventions that have proper monitoring systems in place, as confirmed in evaluability assessments.

Status: Not achieved

Target for 2026: 30 per cent of ILO DC-funded interventions have acceptable monitoring systems in place as measured by EVAL data.

Custodians: PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS, EVAL, regions and technical departments.

40. Progress continues in improving the monitoring and reporting mechanism at the project level, even though EVAL data shows that performance at the project level declined compared to the last period and the 2022 baseline (30 per cent), with acceptable monitoring systems in place in only 24 per cent of interventions. By January 2026, the Office expects to launch an application linking the ILO's programme and budget, DWCPs and DC projects. Some project initiatives stood out for using dedicated monitoring systems, multi-level frameworks and digital platforms to track outputs and outcomes effectively. The involvement of monitoring and

evaluation officers improved quality, and several interventions used both quantitative and qualitative methods such as focus groups and interviews. Innovation attempts such as outcome mapping and regular coordination meetings also have the potential to strengthen reporting, partner capacity and accountability if rolled out systematically instead of on a pilot basis only.

Enabler 4: Number of strategic programmatic and knowledge-sharing and learning discussions to which EVAL contributes with evaluative inputs.

Target (end of 2025): EVAL (including regional evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points) invited to at least four strategic programmatic, knowledge-sharing and learning discussions to provide evaluative inputs.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: EVAL (including regional evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points) invited to and contribute in at least four strategic programmatic, knowledge-sharing and learning discussions to provide evaluative inputs.

Custodians: EVAL (including regional evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points), regions, technical departments, RESEARCH, PROGRAM, IAO and IOAC.

41. Evaluation inputs have been used to inform decision-making at all levels. Globally, EVAL's 2024 high-level evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy informed Office-wide discussions on organizational efficiency. EVAL is currently undertaking an independent evaluation of the ILO's Gender Action Plan 2022–25, which will inform the development of the next ILO Action Plan on Gender that is expected to be discussed by the Governing Body in 2026. EVAL's annual decent work meta-analysis of project evaluations by country programme outcome contributed to outcome-based work planning across the Office. Evaluative inputs are consistently provided to the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight (IAO) when planned audits are announced.
42. Regionally, evaluations informed strategic thinking and strengthened planning capacity. In Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States, findings from meta-analyses and country programme reviews were used in staff retreats to address systemic gaps and guide DWCP planning. Evaluations from refugee-focused projects shaped the design of the new programme for the Syrian Arab Republic.
43. At the project level, evaluations led to concrete design changes. The TRIANGLE+ project (US\$20 million) in Asia and the Pacific incorporated findings on the empowerment of migrant workers. In Morocco, the second phase of the Women as Financially Independent Rural Actors (WAFIRA) project was informed by the final evaluation. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the PRIDE project used mid-term findings to develop replicable strategies on inclusion, now expanded to Brazil. Findings from 63 evaluations also supported the Director-General's report to the 20th American Regional Meeting and related communications.

Enabler 5: Availability of formal training that integrates evaluative thinking in the ILO by 2025.

Target (end of 2025): Training module on evaluation for ILO staff available in ILO People.

Status: Achieved

Target for 2026: At least 25 per cent of all newly onboarded ILO staff have completed the training module on evaluation.

Custodians: HRD, ITCILO and EVAL.

44. The training module on evaluation for ILO staff is ready and has been submitted for deployment on the ILO People platform. Developed by EVAL in collaboration with the ITCILO, the interactive online induction course, “Understanding Evaluation: The Basics”, features custom visuals and platform support. This 30-minute course aims to foster evaluative thinking across the Office. Using a fictional scenario, it connects theory to practice through clear language, practical examples and short quizzes. The course explains the role of evaluation and distinguishes it from related functions.
45. **Recommendation 1: The Governing Body is invited to endorse the topics proposed in the rolling work plan for the high-level evaluations in 2026, as outlined in the rolling work plan, and approve the extension of the Evaluation Strategy until the end of 2026, including the corresponding targets.**

► Part II. Assessing the ILO’s effectiveness and results

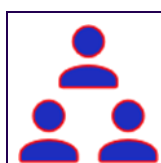
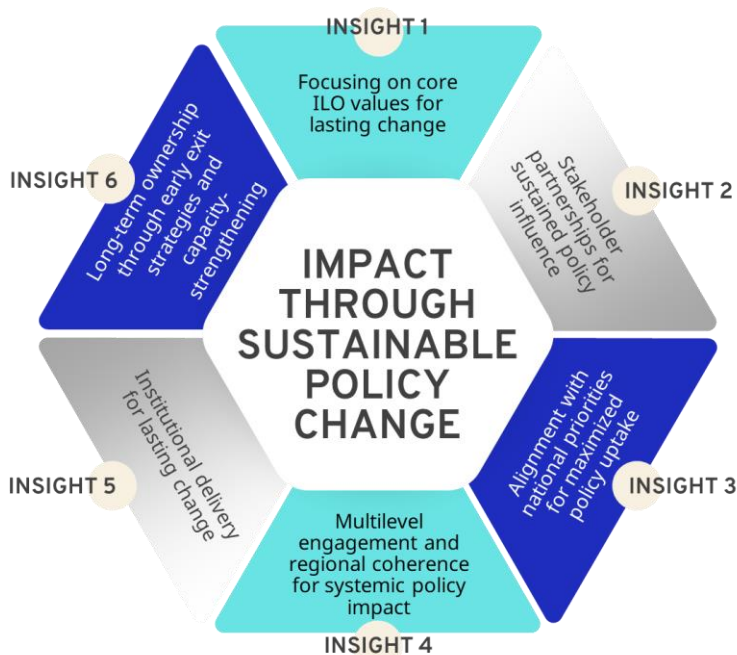
46. For over a decade, EVAL has systematically conducted meta-analyses of decent work results to measure organizational effectiveness which are aligned with both current and previous evaluation strategies. Using the latest dataset, section 2.1 provides a thematic focused analysis of core indicators on **impact and sustainability** from the ILO development cooperation portfolio in 2024, by examining trends across three core impact areas: **policy influence**, **strategic delivery** and **sustainability enhancement**. Using the same dataset, section 2.2 provides the traditional synthesis of key performance findings, measured against 29 key performance indicators (KPIs) and organized by cluster. It reflects overall progress across multiple indicator clusters, while also highlighting persistent efficiency challenges. Reflecting on EVAL’s commitment to strengthening alignment with the ILO’s programme and budget outcomes, the section concludes with an analysis of performance trends at the policy outcome level and across regional clusters of country programme outcomes for 2022–24.

2.1. Impact and sustainability in action: How the ILO shaped policies, delivered strategic results and ensured sustainability through development cooperation in 2024

47. This section presents six key insights into the factors that shaped policy influence, delivered strategic results and ensured sustainability through ILO DC interventions in 2024. The insights are interrelated and mutually reinforcing and are drawn from assessed projects that demonstrated the strongest performance across criteria.³

³ The full series is available at “[i-eval Insights series](#)”.

► Figure 3. Factors that ensured impact through sustainable policy change



Insight 1

By focusing on the core ILO values of tripartism, social dialogue and the promotion of international labour standards, the Organization can achieve lasting change and meaningful impact

48. The ILO's core values, including tripartism, social dialogue and the application of international labour standards, are not only guiding principles. When they are integrated into institutional systems and service delivery, evidence pointed at increased ILO policy relevance, influence and likelihood of sustained impact.
49. Projects with high policy influence and delivery of strategic results consistently embedded the ILO's cross-cutting policy areas – social dialogue, tripartism and normative work – through institutional and legal mechanisms, reinforcing both legitimacy and sustainability. A key strength across several high-performing initiatives was the integration of normative outputs into national frameworks. The Safe and Fair programme, for example, embedded protections for women migrant workers into public systems, contributing to the development or revision of 55 gender-sensitive migration policies across eight countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Normative work often served as both a goal and a strategy: for instance, the Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa (THAMM) project institutionalized fair recruitment standards in public bodies, which were later adopted by the private sector.
50. Social dialogue mechanisms also emerged as powerful drivers of policy influence and increased institutional ownership. The Advancing the Decent Work Agenda in North Africa (ADWA) project and related RBSA-funded initiatives enabled inclusive labour reforms and social protection policies, from strengthening trade unions in Paraguay, for instance, to facilitating national consensus on universal health coverage in Eswatini. In countries such as South Africa and the Republic of Moldova, social partners were instrumental in the ratification of ILO Conventions and the shaping of green transition policies, demonstrating how embedded tripartism and dialogue underpin durable, systemic change.



Insight 2

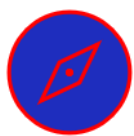
Moving from stakeholder engagement to partnership acts as a driver of sustained policy influence

- 51. Projects that involved tripartite constituents strategically from the outset demonstrated a significantly higher likelihood of influencing policy, achieving strategic relevance and sustaining results and prospective impact over time.**
- 52.** High-performing initiatives engaged tripartite constituents and partners throughout the project cycle, creating inclusive governance, clear roles and local capacities that fostered national ownership and long-term impact. In Eswatini, India, South Africa and Uganda and the ASEAN region, projects used multi-stakeholder approaches to align employment, migration and social protection policies with ILO standards. Examples include Uganda's inter-ministerial committee embedding employment reforms and Eswatini's National Social Security Policy developed through tripartite dialogue. The FAIRWAY and TRIANGLE in ASEAN programmes on safe and fair labour migration leveraged public-private and tripartite engagement, driving 45 national reforms and influencing regional frameworks. Projects lacking such partnerships showed weak positioning and no policy uptake.



Trust is the foundation of effective social dialogue. Without it, mechanisms often fall short. Building trust requires ongoing transparency, shared decision-making, and consistent follow-through.

i-eval: Insights from evidence, No. 2 – Driving change through social dialogue, p. 7



Insight 3

Strategic alignment with national priorities ensures policy uptake and lasting impact

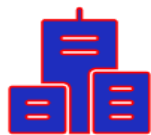
- 53. Strategic alignment with national and regional priorities was identified as a prerequisite for policy uptake and long-term use, increasing the likelihood of impact.**
- 54.** Aligning project goals with national priorities proved crucial for legitimacy and strong results. Projects that supported existing national agendas achieved greater political and institutional ownership, integrating initiatives into budgets and reforms. In Uganda, employment governance reforms aligned with decentralization strategies, embedding ILO tools into planning and coordination. India's Promoting Sustainable Enterprises project shaped policies on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and influenced industrial policy. Jordan's Decent Work for Women project led to legal reforms on maternity protection, equal pay and protection from violence, aligning with national strategies. In Bangladesh, aligning the Labour Act with international labour standards led to the ratification of eight fundamental Conventions. High-performing projects also influenced priorities: in ASEAN, the TRIANGLE programme integrated migration governance into DWCPs, while phase 1 of Africa's ADWA project helped launch Malawi's second DWCP and draft Uganda's third, demonstrating strong partner commitment to addressing decent work deficits, including child labour.



Insight 4

Multi-level engagement and regional coherence strengthen policy impact

- 55. Projects that engaged at local, national and regional levels, rather than at a single level, translated operational learning into policy relevance. The links between grassroots practice and high-level decision-making enhanced legitimacy, adaptation and long-term influence.**
- 56.** High-performing projects excelled by engaging across multiple governance levels, enabling cross-country learning, coherent policy development and responsive implementation. They established mechanisms for capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and the development of national and regional policy frameworks. In Asia, programmes such as TRIANGLE in ASEAN coordinated national reforms aligned with regional commitments, fostering peer exchanges and shared tools that promoted policy coherence and learning. These efforts were embedded in institutional planning, aiding the harmonization of outcomes. The Safe and Fair programme linked local services for women migrant workers with ASEAN labour frameworks, aligning national systems with regional agreements and boosting both implementation and visibility. In Latin America, technical platforms and South-South cooperation enhanced regional responses to child labour, improving national systems to align with regional goals. Conversely, projects that were limited to a single level and disconnected from national policies struggled to achieve scale or systemic impact.



Insight 5

Embedding projects in national structures ensures institutional delivery and lasting change

- 57. High-impact, sustainable change is most likely when projects are delivered *through* national systems and tripartite structures, rather than in parallel to them.**
- 58.** Evidence showed that high-impact interventions were integrated into existing institutional frameworks, often co-delivered by national actors and seen as extensions of public mandates rather than external initiatives. This operational approach – characterized by formalized roles in implementation, joint planning and co-developed tools – enhanced visibility and accountability and provided national actors with the authority and incentive to drive strategic reform. In turn, taking an institutionalization approach strengthened policy influence and sustainability as it enabled long-term ownership, coordination and integration into existing public systems.
- 59.** An exemplary case was found in the “Accelerating action for the elimination of child labour in supply chains in Africa” intervention (ACCEL-1), for which one of the key enablers of the project’s enhanced sustainability was its use of existing government structures and its ability to integrate mechanisms and tools within existing actions and budget lines. Similarly, the Safe and Fair programme invested heavily on building institutional capacity across governments and service providers by strengthening policies and procedures to better protect the rights of women migrant workers and increase their access to services addressing violence against women. Focusing its work at the institutional level as opposed to the individual level helped to promote the sustainability of results while also mitigating the challenges faced by high government staff turnover.



Insight 6

Enabling long-term ownership and enhanced sustainability through early exit planning and structured capacity development is a prerequisite for sustainability

- 60. Sustainability was strongest in projects that planned early for institutional ownership and structured capacity development, combining exit strategies with deep integration into national systems and learning processes, enabling national partners to manage and scale results beyond the project time frame.**
- 61.** Projects that embedded exit strategies from the outset – defining institutional responsibilities, budgeting for continuity and ensuring resource availability – demonstrated the strongest sustainability outcomes. In Bangladesh, for instance, an ILO–European Union intervention institutionalized tools and responsibilities within the Ministry of Labour, supported by a formal handover plan. Similarly, in the Republic of Moldova, employment services were integrated into public systems with structured follow-up to maintain momentum.
- 62.** Sustainability was further reinforced where institutional learning occurred: the most effective projects combined technical transfer with political and operational planning, strengthening institutional capacity while ensuring that national actors were equipped to maintain, adapt and build on results. This went beyond training, involving the development of tools, systems and human capacity. In contrast, several lower-performing evaluation results highlighted missing or underdeveloped exit strategies, unclear institutional roles and weak coordination with national systems.

2.2. Assessing the overall effectiveness of the ILO DC portfolio in 2024 against 29 key performance indicators

- 63.** The effectiveness of operations in 2024 was assessed by EVAL using 29 consistent performance criteria, each rated on a four-point scale: 1 (unsuccessful) to 4 (highly successful). ⁴ These criteria are grouped into four clusters – strategic relevance and coherence; effectiveness; sustainability and impact; and efficiency – aligned with OECD-DAC evaluation standards and ILO cross-cutting policy priorities. A summary of performance results and key driving factors is presented below. ⁵

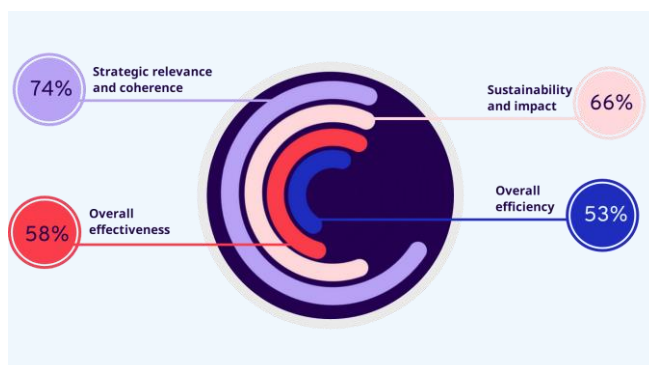
Key trends and insights on overall ILO DC performance in 2024



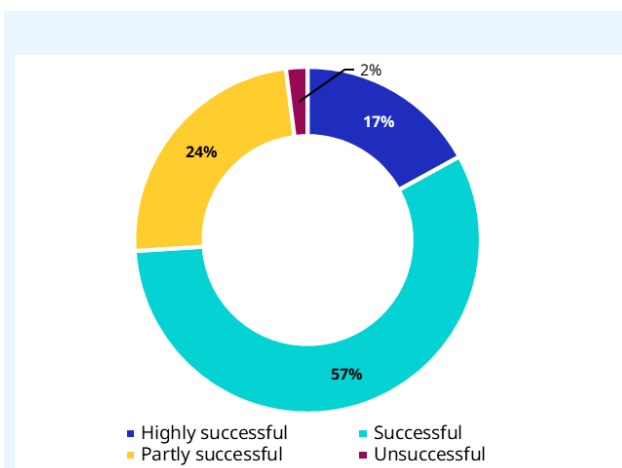
In 2024, 61 per cent of the ILO DC portfolio performed at or above average – a 3.5 percentage point increase from the 2022–23 biennium – signalling a clear trend of improved performance.

⁴ Positive performance is attributed only when the project achieves a rating of “Successful” or “Highly successful” for a criterion. A rating of “Partly successful”, even though it reflects a level of performance that may be adequate, is not included in the aggregate measure of positive performance.

⁵ The complete decent work meta-analysis, including detailed evidence and examples of success, is available at [“Synthesis reviews and meta-analyses”](#).

► **Figure 4. Breakdown of performance by criteria clusters, 2024****Strongest-performing categories in 2024**

- 94 per cent responsiveness to decent work priorities
- 72 per cent results on normative work and international labour standards
- 80 per cent success in targeted capacity-building for constituents
- 98 per cent cost efficiency through reallocation, cost-sharing and synergies

Strategic relevance and coherence of ILO development cooperation in 2024► **Figure 5. Average distribution of scores on the strategic relevance and coherence of interventions, 2024****► 74 per cent**

of the ILO's DC interventions were rated positively for strategic relevance and coherence. Strengths included strong alignment with ILO, UN and national strategies, and solid links to programme and budget outcomes and the SDGs. Coordination with other UN agencies also stood out. Responsiveness to national decent work needs and involvement of constituents showed mixed results, while project design emerged as the weakest area, with only a third rated as successful.

Strength of evidence: ⁶ High – 83 per cent



6 per cent increase in performance compared to 2022–23

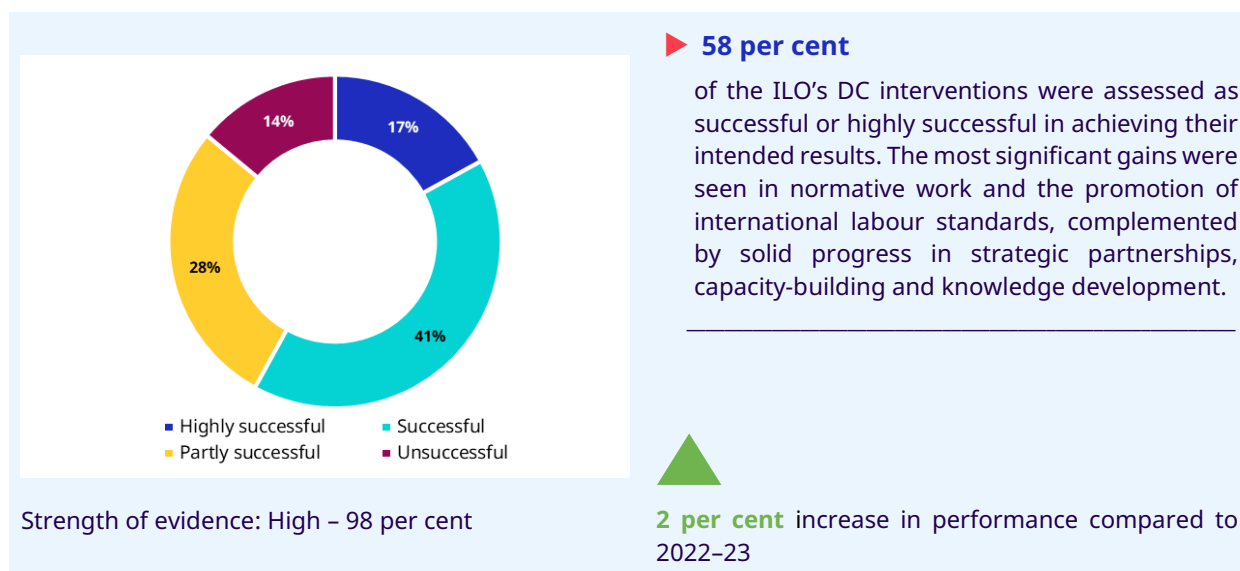
- 64.** The 2024 results outperformed those of the 2022–23 biennium in this category, marked by strong responsiveness to decent work priorities identified by constituents and aligned with organizational strategies. Notable strengths included the ILO's effective coordination within the UN system and the strategic and operational alignment of project objectives with the 2030 Agenda and SDG targets, reflected in 89 per cent of successful cases.
- 65.** Evidence indicated variable stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle, with the strongest achievement of results observed where all constituent groups were actively involved in project design and planning, supported by dedicated mechanisms for inclusive decision-making. However, only one third of projects exhibited high performance tied to clear, realistic

⁶ An evidence strength scale was applied to each performance based on the consistency and depth of supporting evidence: High: Performance consistently observed across multiple evidence sources in 80–100 per cent of evaluations; Moderate: Performance observed through multiple sources in 50–79 per cent of evaluations; Low: Performance occasionally observed in 30–49 per cent of evaluations; Very low: Performance not observed or weak in 0–29 per cent of evaluations.

and stakeholder-endorsed objectives. Nearly 65 per cent of DC interventions were deemed to be over-ambitious, often lacking well-defined objectives and coherent intervention logic.

Effectiveness of ILO development cooperation in delivering results in 2024

► **Figure 6. Average distribution of scores on the overall effectiveness of interventions, 2024**



66. In 2024, overall performance showed a modest improvement over the previous year. Approximately half of the interventions successfully achieved their immediate outputs and objectives. These successful projects were distinguished by timely execution, high technical quality and strong uptake by stakeholders. Among key achievements in 2024, normative work and the promotion of international labour standards delivered positive results in 72 per cent of projects. Success in this area was driven by targeted capacity-building and focused support to employers' and workers' organizations, as well as other partners, in aligning national practices with international labour standards.
67. High-performing interventions consistently leveraged the ILO's tripartite mandate and convening power to bring together governments, employers and workers. This was often facilitated through mechanisms such as tripartite project advisory committees, policy dialogue platforms and stakeholder councils. These efforts strengthened the legitimacy of public policy processes, enhanced worker protections and promoted the inclusion of vulnerable groups – contributing, in some cases, to institutional reforms and greater alignment of national legislation with international labour standards.



Project evaluations consistently show that tripartite social dialogue bridges stakeholder understanding and fosters shared ownership of legislative reforms. This collaborative approach advances policy change and embeds international labour standards in ways that reflect national priorities. By promoting accountability and inclusivity, social dialogue accelerates sustainable, effective promotion of international labour standards across diverse contexts.

i-eval: Insights from evidence No. 1 – How has the ILO performed in promoting international labour standards through development cooperation projects?, p. 8

68. In 2024, key operational support modalities of the ILO proved to be strong drivers of effectiveness. Knowledge generation performed successfully in 70 per cent of projects, directly

informing national policies, legislative processes and institutional reforms, while also enabling high-profile collaborations with UN agencies and international partners. Capacity-strengthening efforts yielded strong results in 80 per cent of the ILO DC portfolio, with institutional development prominently featured, particularly in support of labour inspectorates, national employment services and social protection institutions. Partnerships played a pivotal role in both implementation and sustainability, with 83 per cent of interventions highlighting the ILO's strategic value in convening stakeholders and facilitating multi-level coordination.



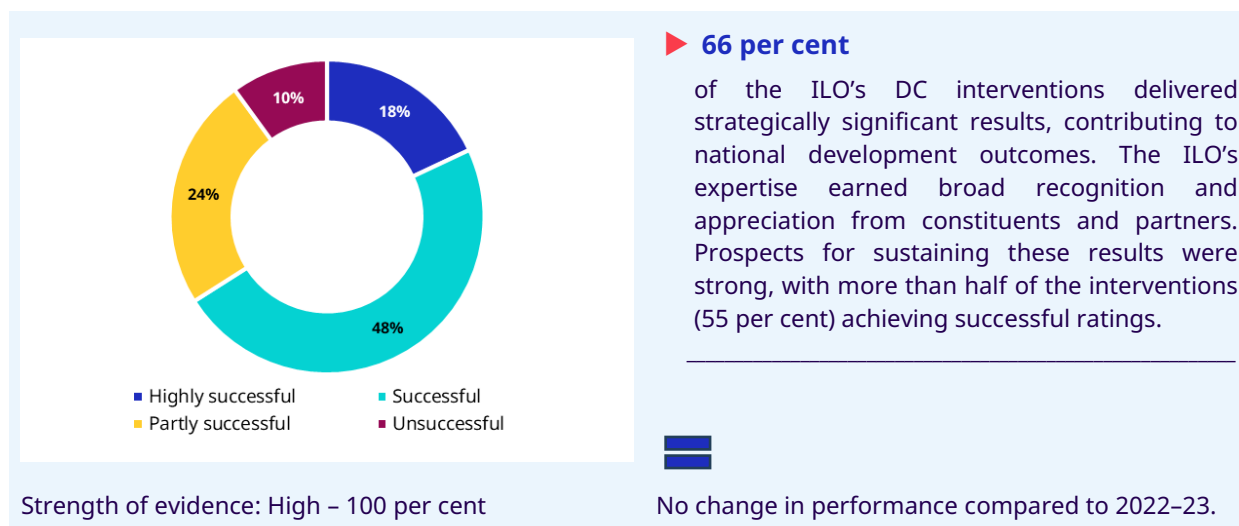
Through training, institutional support and technical assistance, the ILO has empowered local actors to promote and uphold international labour standards beyond project lifespans, effectively overcoming political resistance and structural barriers.

i-eval: Insights from evidence No. 1, p. 11.

69. While 78 per cent of projects targeted support for vulnerable groups and aimed to improve their access to decent work and living conditions, gender-responsiveness was integrated in just over half (53 per cent) of interventions. Inclusion of persons with disabilities remained limited, featuring in only 20 per cent of projects, while environmental sustainability and just transition considerations were addressed in only 18 per cent – highlighting critical gaps in inclusive and forward-looking programming.

Impact and sustainability of the ILO DC portfolio in 2024

► **Figure 7. Average distribution of scores on the overall impact and sustainability of interventions, 2024**



70. In 2024, the ILO's recognized expertise, policymaking leadership and strength in applied research were key drivers of successful performance. DC-funded interventions had broad and effective policy influence across diverse themes and regions, with direct contributions to the drafting, adoption or revision of national policies and strategies. Evidence pointed to stronger enabling environments, improved legal and regulatory frameworks, and enhanced institutional capacity – including greater awareness and use of knowledge and tools for strategy implementation and policy reform. At the regional level, strategic partnerships further amplified the ILO's policy impact.



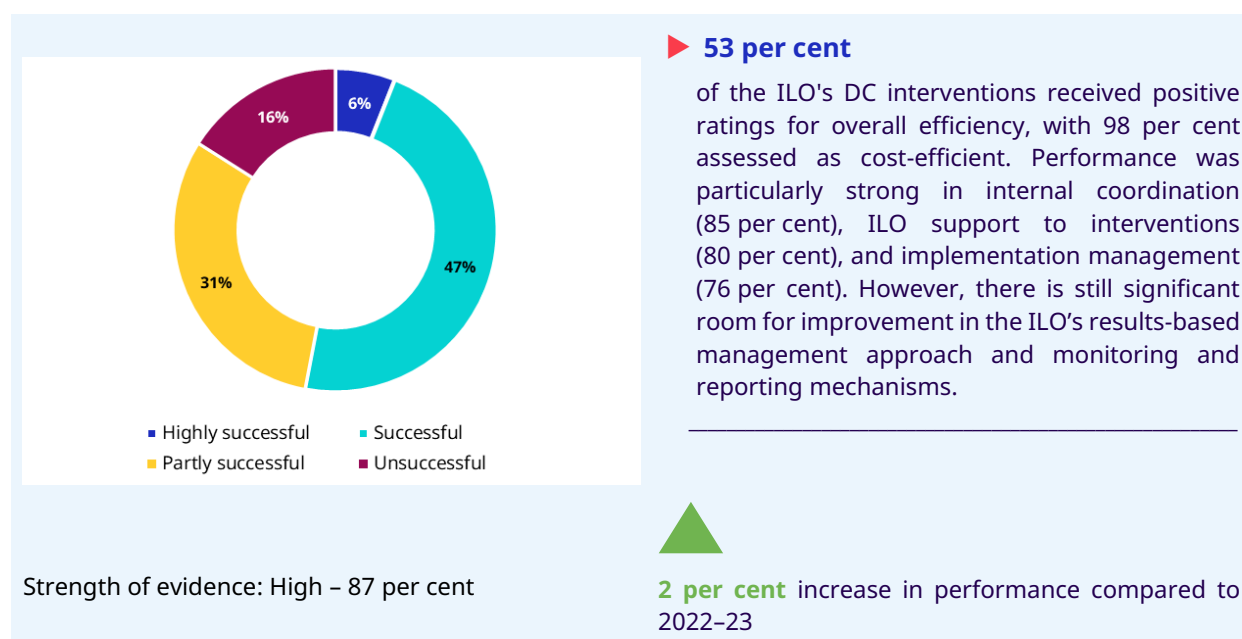
A key enabler of successful results for policy influence was the consistent integration of tripartism and social dialogue in policy formulation processes.

i-eval: Insights from evidence No. 1, p. 8.

71. The sustainability of results was generally moderate, with 55 per cent of successful ILO DC interventions contributing to the integration of outcomes into national frameworks, policies and institutions. These efforts supported the ratification and adoption of policy and regulatory instruments, as well as the development of related strategies and action plans. Interventions that fostered early and continuous engagement with tripartite constituents and key stakeholders generated broad-based ownership across levels. Sustainability was further reinforced by strengthening enabling environments, embedding results into existing initiatives and budget lines, and building the capacity of relevant actors.

Operational and financial efficiency of ILO development cooperation in 2024

► **Figure 8. Average distribution of scores on the overall efficiency of interventions, 2024**



72. While the aggregate of 53 per cent may appear low, in 2024 the ILO demonstrated higher operational efficiency in delivering its DC portfolio on key sub-indicators. In 80 per cent of cases, the **quality and scope of technical, programmatic, administrative and financial support** were rated positively. Strong performance was evident when **projects leveraged expertise across teams** at ILO headquarters, regional offices, Decent Work Technical Support Teams and country offices – enabling more efficient use of resources, tighter alignment with strategic priorities and greater potential for sustaining and scaling results.



Evaluations consistently cited effective mobilization of thematic specialists and use of tailored backstopping arrangements as contributing to a project's success. Internal synergies were strongest when project designs deliberately built on previous ILO work or leveraged shared technical teams, reinforcing coherence and continuity.

Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2024, forthcoming, p. 59.

- 73. Implementation management emerged as a strong area** across the ILO portfolio, with 76 per cent of projects performing well through structured processes that enabled efficient and effective delivery. However, only 16 per cent effectively applied a results-based management approach, and just 24 per cent demonstrated strong monitoring and reporting, limiting progress tracking (notably at the outcome level) and timely strategy adjustment.
- 74.** In terms of resource efficiency, **98 per cent of interventions were cost-efficient**, thanks to strategic reallocation, cost-sharing and leveraging of synergies. Yet, 60 per cent of interventions faced resource limitations, including inadequate funding, staffing shortages and delayed disbursements at the project launch stage, which threatened the effective delivery of results.

2.3. Trends in effectiveness by policy outcomes: 2022–23 and 2024

- 75.** This section presents a comparative analysis of average weighted performance ratings of ILO interventions, categorized by country programme outcomes and aggregated by policy outcome and region. The focus is on assessing overall effectiveness, sustainability and impact across two time frames: the 2022–23 biennium and 2024.^{7,8}

Positive key trends

► **70 per cent** of the ILO's interventions promoting **labour protection for all workers** delivered the strongest performance during 2022–24, with stand-out results in the Africa region followed closely by Asia and the Pacific

► **65 per cent** of the ILO's efforts to advance **full and productive employment** showed strong performance in 2022–24, with notable success in Latin America and the Caribbean

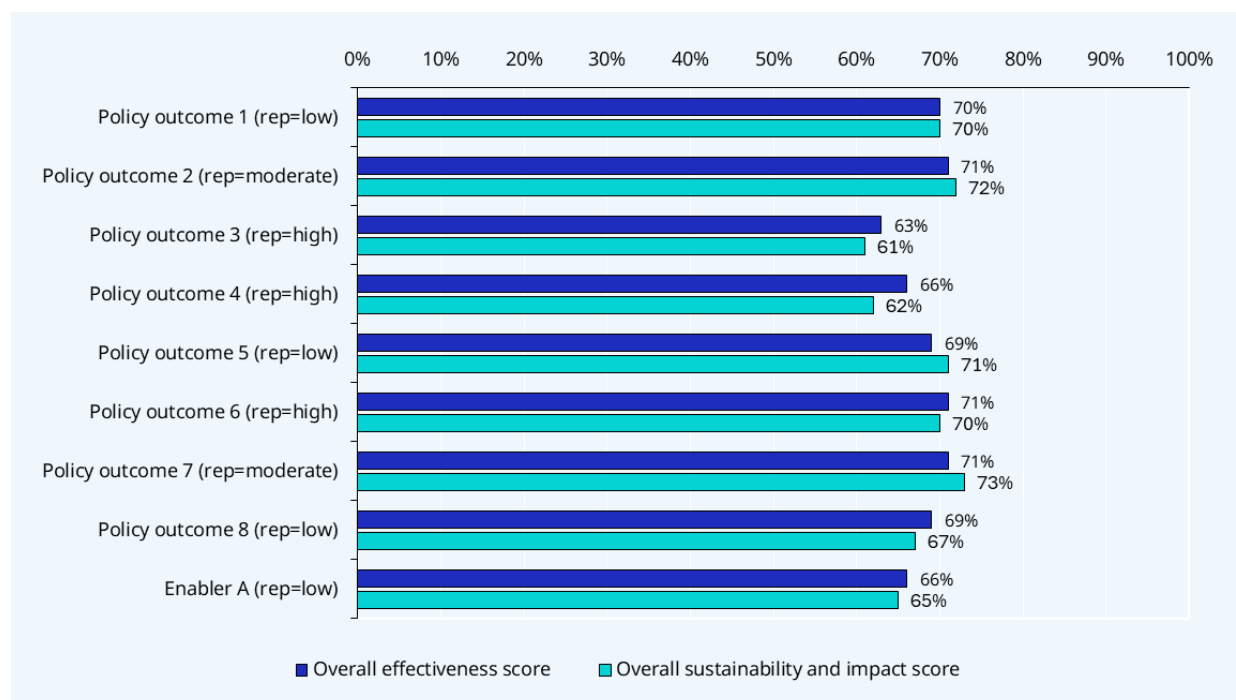
► **60 per cent** of the ILO's support for **sustainable enterprises** delivered strong results in 2022–24, with Latin America and the Caribbean emerging as a key region of success

⁷ Given the uneven distribution of reports across policy outcomes and the limited sample size of 147 evaluation reports covering 2022–24, findings should be interpreted with caution, as variations in representativeness may influence the results.

⁸ For reporting purposes, sample representativeness ("rep.") reflects the extent to which reported performance is supported by multiple evidence sources, measured by the number of evaluations per policy outcome. Representativeness is classified as High (≥40 reports), Moderate (20–39 reports) or Low (<20 reports). This section presents findings from outcomes with high and moderate representativeness, ensuring greater reliability in extrapolating performance trends.

76. Figure 9 compares average results on effectiveness, impact and sustainability. To increase the relevance of the reporting, the policy outcomes under the ILO Programme and Budget for 2024–25 were considered.⁹ While overall performance across all ILO policy outcomes and enabling outcomes was satisfactory in 2022–24, the Organization delivered its strongest results under policy outcome 6, **protection at work for all**. This was particularly evident in the Africa region, followed closely by Asia and the Pacific. Country programme outcomes linked to this policy area consistently excelled in both achieving and sustaining results.
77. High-impact interventions targeted key issues such as labour migration governance, wage protection and fair recruitment, formalization, responsible value chains, occupational safety and health, and the extension of social protection to underserved groups. Strong performance was also recorded in promoting international labour standards, advancing normative work and reinforcing social dialogue and tripartism, laying a solid foundation for sustainable change.

► **Figure 9. Performance by policy outcome: Comparing average results on effectiveness, impact, and sustainability (2022–24)**



78. Another area of strong performance was the ILO's work under policy outcomes 3 (**full and productive employment**) and 4 (**sustainable enterprises**), with notable achievements in both the results delivered and their long-term sustainability. Initiatives promoting productive employment generated tangible impact by focusing on local economic development, formalization, improved labour governance and the promotion of entrepreneurship and

⁹ **Policy outcome 1** – Strong, modernized normative action for social justice;

Policy outcome 2 – Strong, representative and influential tripartite constituents and effective social dialogue;

Policy outcome 3 – Full and productive employment for just transitions;

Policy outcome 4 – Sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work;

Policy outcome 5 – Gender equality and equality of treatment and opportunities for all;

Policy outcome 6 – Protection at work for all;

Policy outcome 7 – Universal social protection;

Policy outcome 8 – Integrated policy and institutional responses for social justice through decent work;

Enabler A – Enhanced knowledge, innovation, cooperation and communication to advance social justice.

decent work. These efforts reached diverse populations – including youth, and refugee and host communities – and were effectively implemented across urban, peri-urban and rural settings.

79. Although overall performance under policy outcome 2 (**strengthened tripartite constituents and effective social dialogue**) was moderate, the ILO delivered key results in promoting decent work across diverse contexts. Evidence shows that capacity-building efforts enabled effective tripartite dialogue, which in turn catalysed significant policy and institutional reforms. Similarly, while the ILO's efforts on policy outcome 7 (**universal social protection**) had a similar level of performance, evidence points to successful support across regions for evidence-based reforms and institutional capacity-strengthening, contributing to more resilient and inclusive social protection systems aligned with ILO standards.
80. Performance patterns for the remaining policy outcomes are not covered in this narrative due to limited evaluation data, which reduces the representativeness and reliability of available evidence.
81. **Recommendation 2: EVAL should continue fine-tuning its dashboard that aggregates key performance data on 29 KPIs from evaluation reports at the country, regional and global levels. By providing real-time access, this dashboard, together with the i-eval AI Assistant, will strengthen accountability and support evidence-informed decision-making and project improvements across the ILO.**

► Draft decision

82. **The Governing Body endorsed the recommendations of the Annual Evaluation Report 2024–25 (paragraphs 45 and 81) for implementation by the Office.**